of power by Central Power Sector Utilities should only be against advance payment or irrevocable letter of credit. However, taking into consideration the adverse financial condition of Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking (DESU), implementation of this decision was deferred till 31.12.1996 in the case of National Capital Territory of Delhi. Since DESU did not make full payment of current dues of Badarpur Thermal Power Station (BTPS) and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), regulation of power to Delhi was enforced on 1.2.1997. The position has been again reviewed in a meeting on 10.2.1997 and it was decided to withdraw regulation of power and that the shortfall in payments made by DESU to BTPS and NTPC for the period 1st January, 1997 to 30th April, 1997 will be adjusted against the dues payable by Central Government to NCT of Delhi. The Government of NCT Delhi has given an undertaking for effecting the adjustment and for making full payment of current dues of BTPS and NTPC from 1st May, 1997.

[English]

Right to Information

773. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have set up a Working Group on right to information and promotion of open and transparent Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken so far by the Union/State Governments in this regard ?"

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) to (c) Government have set up a Working Group on Right to Information and Promotion of open and transparent Government. A copy of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances O.M. No.34011/1(s)/97-Estt.(B) dated 2nd January, 1997 indicating the composition and terms of reference of the Group is on the Table of the House enclosed as Statement.

Statement

No.34011/1(S)/97-Estt.(B)
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, P.G. & Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training

New Delhi, dated 2nd Jan., 1997

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject : Setting up of a Working Group on Right to Information and promotion of open and transparent Government.

There is widespread agreement on the need for a clean and responsive administration based on the principles of accountability, openness, decentralisation and citizen orientation. In the context of the National Debate on Effective and Responsive Administration initiated by the Government of India, it has been decided to formulate specific measures for the introduction of greater transparency in the functioning of Government and public bodies, with reference to both their own employees and interaction with members of the public. It is also considered necessary to ensure widespread and easy access of citizens to all information relating to operations of Government and public agencies, subject to specified exceptions. For this pupose, the possibility of the introduction of a legislation for Right to Information at the levels of Central and State Government could be examined after appropriate consultations. This would involve also the consideration of amendment to various relevant legislations including the Official Secrets Act.

2. In view of the above, it has been decided with the approval of the Cabinet Secretary, to constitute a Working Group on "Right to Information and Transparency" under the Chairmanship of Shri H.D. Shourie, Chairman, Common Cause, New Delhi with the following composition :—

1.	Shri H.D. Shourie	Chairman
2.	Shri Soli Sorabjee	Member
3.	PIO, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting	Member
4.	A representative of the Ministry of Home Affairs	Member
5.	Additional/Joint Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs	Member
6.	A representative of the Ministry of Railways	Member
7.	A representative of the Department of Posts	Member
8.	A representative of the Department of Telecom	Member
9.	Shri Narinder Singh, Jt. Secy., Department of Personnel and Training	Member

3. The Terms of Reference of the Working Group are as follows :

a. To examine the feasibility and need of either a full fledged Right to Information Act or its introduction in a phased manner to meet the needs of open and responsive Government.

b. To identify specific areas where Right to Information can be built into the working procedures and working system especially in large departmental undertakings including Railways, Telecommunications, Postal Ser-

vices, Passports and Banking at the Central Government level.

c. To examine the internal working procedures with a view to introducing greater openness and transparency in handling of employees grievances and internal consultation.

d. To examine the rules framework with particular reference to the existing Conduct Rules and Manual of Office Procedure with a view to introducing greater openness and transparency in Government working including dealings with employees.

e. To examine the nature and content of training to promote greater openness and more customer responsive public dealings.

4. The Working Group will submit its report within a period of two months.

5. The expenditure on local transport and other allowances of the non-official members, as per rules applicable to Group 'A' officers of the Government of India, will be met from the budget of Department of Personnel and Training.

(Y.G. Parande)

Director

Tele.3015589

To

Shri H.D. Shourie, A-31, Westend, New Delhi-21.

Shri Soli Sorabjee, Sr. Advocate, 134 Sundar Nagar, New Delhi - 110 003.

Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi.

Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, North Block, New Delhi.

Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi.

Chairman, Railway Board, Rail Bhavan, New Delhi.

Secretary, Department of Posts, Dak Bhavan, New Delhi.

Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Sanchar Bhavan, New Delhi.

Principal Information Officer, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi.

Joint Secretary (E), DOPT, North Block, New Delhi.

Copy for information to :-

1. Staff Officer to Cabinet Secretary

2. PS to Prime Minister

3. PPS to Secretary (P)

4. PS to: EO, AS(P), AS(S&V), JS(T), JS(AT&A)

Pension Procedure

774. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to simplify the pension procedure to ensure that the retiring employees get their payment without delay ; and

(b) if so, the steps taken so far and proposed to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) The Government of India have issued necessary instructions on 23.1.1987, 2.5.1994 and 24.8.1994 for ensuring that the retiring employees get their payment without any delay (Details are given in Statements - I, II and III) respectively. These instructions lay down that the Head of the Department/ offices are to ensure compliane of Government orders for ensuring authorisation of pension, provisional or final, by the date of retirement. These instructions also lay down that the Heads of Offices/Departments are responsible for ensuring timely payment and for any delay action is required to be taken against the delinquent officials and fixing responsibility for the delay in payments.

Statement–I

MOST IMMEDIATE

No.38/9/87-P&PW

Government of India

Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

Department of Pension and Pensioners, Welfare

New Delhi.

January 23, 1987

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject : Payment of provisional pension/gratuity.

The Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972 and the corresponding rules applicable to All India Services Officers, Armed Forces personnel and Railway employees provide for advance action to be taken by the Heads of Office and the Audit/Accounts Officers to ensure that the amount of pension and gratuity due to a retired Government employee is assessed well in time and the pension payment order issued not later than one month in advance of the date of retirement. In cases where pension and gratuity cannot be settled as contemplated above, the Rules provide for the payment of provisional pension and provisional gratuity (e.g. Rule 64 of the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972). If the Head of Office is of the opinion that the Government